

OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF A TYPE-SPECIES FOR
PHASIA LATREILLE. Z.N.(S.) 1706
 (see volume 22, pages 243-245)

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I wish to record my opposition to the proposal by Herting (1965, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 22 : 243-245) for action under the plenary powers to suppress the Latreille fixation of a type-species for *Phasia* and to designate instead *Phasia rubra* Girschner.

2. The fact that *Phasia* is the type-genus of a subfamily, Phasiinae, is actually not important in the present case. All genera and species involved in the problem are members of the same subfamily, and even of the tribe Phasiini in a restricted sense. Thus no upsetting change in family-group names can be cited in support of suspension of the Rules.

3. Herting remarks (paragraph 2) that Townsend's proposal of *Ectophasia* for *Phasia* of authors is unimportant in America because there are no nearctic species of either *Ectophasia* or *Phasia* in Townsend's sense. This is true, as far as known, but there are nearctic species of *Phasia* in the strict sense (type *subcoleoprata*), and we are thus directly concerned with a decision on the proper use of *Phasia*.

4. Further points in the discussion will be emphasized by a chronological sequence of relevant publications (for brevity, references already cited by Herting are not repeated):

1767. Linnaeus described *Conops subcoleoprata*, "Upsaliae".

1775. Fabricius: *Syrphus subcoleopratus* (L.), "Angliae".

1794. Fabricius described the true *Syrphus subcoleopratus* (L.), "Habitat in Suecia. Mus. Dom. Bosc.," and proposed *Syrphus hemipterus* (now *Alophora hemiptera*) for the English specimens previously misidentified as *subcoleopratus*.

1798. Fabricius: *Thereva subcoleoprata* (F.), "Habitat in Europa boreali Dom. Bosc." (Citations are given to Linnaeus, 1767, and Fabricius, 1794.)

1804. Latreille: *Phasia*, new genus for "Les Thérèves de M. Fab."

1805. Latreille: *Phasia subcoleoprata*, citing as source "*Thereva coleoprata* [sic] Fab." (Fixation of type-species by subsequent monotypy. The spelling is either a lapsus or a typographical error; cf. Latreille, 1810.)

1805. Fabricius: *Thereva subcoleoprata* (F.), "Habitat in Europa boreali Mus. Dom. Bosc."

1810. Latreille designated "*Thereva subcoleoprata*, Fab." as type-species of *Phasia*.

1824. Meigen correctly identified *Phasia subcoleoprata*, having Swedish examples from Fallén at Lund. Under *P. crassipennis*, Meigen mentioned a small variety, about which he stated, as Herting notes, "Dies ist *Ther. subcoleoprata* in Fabricius Museum".

5. Herting may be right (paragraphs 4-6) on the identity of the small variety of *crassipennis* that Meigen (1824) found labeled "*Ther. subcoleoprata*" in the Fabrician Collection at Kiel, but I cannot agree with his further conclusion, based on the conception of a misidentified type-species, that "*rubra* Girschner is the type-species of *Phasia* Latr." The works of Fabricius and others between 1767 and 1794, and even later, show that *subcoleoprata* was often misidentified, because it does not occur in Western Europe and the name was applied to various species. The existence of the name on a certain specimen in the Fabrician Collection does not automatically assure us of the entire usage of that name.

6. Most important, the Fabrician Collection is *not* the relevant and significant material in the *Phasia* problem. The truly relevant material is that published as *Thereva subcoleoprata* by Fabricius (1798), to which Latreille (1804) must have referred in his citation under the genus *Phasia*. That material was in the Bosc Collection, i.e., in Paris, and not in the Fabrician Collection in Kiel. One cannot say

positively that Latreille in Paris saw the Bosc specimens, but because of his close association with Bosc, it is virtually certain that he did.¹ In any event his published reference to "Les Thérèves de M. Fab." inevitably refers us back to Fabricius (1798), and thence to Fabricius (1794), in both of which only material from the Bosc Collection is cited for *subcoleoprata*. Fabricius also referred only to the Bosc Collection in 1805 in the summation of his work on Diptera. Meigen (1824) cited these three Fabrician references in his identification of the true *subcoleoptera* from Sweden. I must therefore conclude, contrary to Herting's view, that *Phasia subcoleoprata* was not misidentified by Latreille, and that true *subcoleoprata* Linnaeus is the type-species of *Phasia* Latreille, as fixed (1805) and later designated (1810) by Latreille himself.

7. Furthermore, the descriptions of *subcoleoprata* by Fabricius (1794, 1798) and of *Phasia* by Latreille agree quite well, as pointed out by Dupuis (1949), and they agree with typical *subcoleoprata* but not with *rubra* Girschner nor with the description of Meigen's small variety of *crassipennis*. It should also be pointed out, as noted above, that Meigen himself (1824) recognized the above agreement and cited *subcoleoprata* of Fabricius (1794, 1798, 1805) and of Latreille under typical *Phasia subcoleoprata* (Linnaeus), which Meigen redescribed from Swedish examples received from Fallén at Lund. I see no justification for ignoring the several major references to *Thereva subcoleoprata* given by Meigen on page 190, while giving special emphasis and reliability to a mention of it in a sentence of discussion on page 186 under *crassipennis*.

8. The erroneous use of *Phasia* was recognized over a half century ago by Coquillett (1910) and Townsend (1912), and the latter proposed *Ectophasia* for *crassipennis* Fabricius, representing *Phasia* of authors, not of Latreille. Townsend maintained this usage throughout his life work on the family, which culminated in his monumental "Manual of Myiology" in 12 parts (1934-42). Brooks (1945), in reviewing the North American *Phasia* complex, followed Townsend's conclusion. Dupuis in 1949, and again in 1963 in his thorough and definitive monograph of the Phasiinae, concurred and adopted *Ectophasia*. This same interpretation was also recognized as correct by Sabrosky and Arnaud (1965) when preparing the section "Tachinidae" for the recently published "A Catalog of the Diptera of America North of Mexico" (*Ectophasia* is not included, but *Phasia* is used in the sense required by the acceptance of *Ectophasia* for *crassipennis*). There are thus some major and important modern works that have adopted the correct conclusions of Coquillett and Townsend of a half century ago.

9. Although the correct name for the *crassipennis* group, *Ectophasia*, has been a clearcut conclusion for over a half century, the correct application of *Phasia* itself has unfortunately been confused. Both Coquillett and Townsend, under the name of *coleoprata* Fabricius, or even *coleoprata* Latreille, misinterpreted the type-species as being a synonym of *Alophora hemiptera* (Fabricius). Dupuis (1949, 1963) correctly pointed out that the type-species is *subcoleoprata* and that *Phasia* applies to the restricted genus known as *Phoranthia* Rondani. Sabrosky and Arnaud (1965) reviewed the arguments on both sides, agreed with Dupuis, and followed him in using *Phasia* for *subcoleoprata* and allies.

10. The generic classification of this complex is still subject to difference of opinion, but that is a zoological matter and not subject to rules of nomenclature. Some authors recognize three genera, others only two. The *crassipennis* group (*Ectophasia*, *Phasia* of authors not Latreille) is one genus; the *hemiptera* (*Alophora*) and *subcoleoprata* (*Phasia*, *Phoranthia*) groups may or may not be combined.

¹ In volume I (1804) of the "Histoire naturelle des Crustacés et des Insectes," on page viii of the Preface, Latreille refers warmly to "mes amis Olivier et Bosc," "avec lesquels je me suis formé dans l'art d'observer les Insectes".

11. The zoologically and nomenclaturally correct conclusion is that the type-species of *Phasia* Latreille is typical *subcoleoprata* Linnaeus. This has been adopted without difficulty in important recent works on the group. The proposal to use the plenary powers to designate *rubra* Girschner as type-species should be rejected as unfounded and unnecessary.

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 SABROSKY, C. W. and ARNAUD, P. H., Jr. 1965. Tachinidae, in STONE et al., *A catalog of the Diptera of America north of Mexico*. 1696 pp. (*Phasia*, p. 969)

COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF A TYPE-SPECIES FOR
PROSPALTELLA ASHMEAD, 1904. Z.N.(S.) 1713
 (see volume 22, pages 261-262)

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I favor this action, because it will validate preponderant usage all over the world for a period of 60 years. There is now an enormous literature using the name *Prospaltella* in the sense of the type-species *auranti* (Howard), a cosmopolitan species. The comprehensive paper that Howard published in 1907 (U.S.D.A., Bureau of Entomology Tech. Ser. 12, pt. 4, "New genera and species of Aphelinidae with a revised table of genera") in which the type-species was given as *aurantii* established usage throughout the world. The species *murtfeldtae* (Howard) that had been clearly designated type-species in 1894 is one that occurs only in North America, it is rather rare, and it is unknown to most workers. It would be a mistake to invoke priority at this late date and rename *Prospaltella* Howard of 1907. I have long known that this discrepancy between usage and priority existed for *Prospaltella*, but I rather thought the matter would never be brought up, the actual type-species being conveniently obscure. Now that the discrepancy has been made the subject of a proposal for action by the Commission under their plenary powers, I can only express myself as being in favor of it.

COMMENTS ON THE REQUEST FOR A DECLARATION AGAINST THE
 SUPPRESSION OF *NOMINA DUBIA*. Z.N.(S.) 1715
 (see volume 22, pages 265-266)

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I agree with the disquiet expressed by Commissioner Sabrosky over a number of recent applications for the suppression of names for the reason that they are *nomina dubia*. But I am far from convinced that a formal Declaration is warranted or even desirable. The term *nomen dubium* has no formal status in nomenclature and the qualification of a name by this term requires no consequences through the Code; moreover, it is not one of the conditions under which the use of the plenary powers is authorized. It follows, therefore, that without fundamental modification of the Code the Secretary can inform applicants for the suppression of *nomina dubia* (on those